



# THE WESTMINSTER MESSENGER

Westminster Presbyterian Church • 262 State Street • Albany • New York • [www.wpcalbany.org](http://www.wpcalbany.org)

## Lent 2015

### In this issue:

---

Pastoral Reflections  
Page 2

Sundays & 2nd Hours  
Page 3

Youth & Children  
Page 4

Spring  
African Dinner  
Page 5

Music News  
Page 6 & 7

Christian Life &  
Learning Book List  
Page 8 & 9

Lenten Studies  
Page 10

Calendar  
Page 11

### LENT

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
*who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.*

*Philippians 2:5-7*

We begin our journey in Lent with an appeal for humility. As Christ emptied himself (some translations render this, “made himself on no account”), so Paul encourages Christians to follow in His way by emptying ourselves in all humility.

We know what it is to encounter a person who is ‘full of himself,’ so we can easily imagine in contrast the virtue in emptying oneself. But do we really understand what that might look like? Have we ever encountered anyone, other than Jesus himself, who has attained the humility to which Paul calls us?

John the Baptist made a simple statement about Jesus:  
“He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

May this be for each of us a guide for our spiritual journey as we approach the cross upon which Jesus died ●



# PASTORAL Reflections

Pastor Jim Reisner

## LET THE SAME MIND BE IN YOU THAT WAS IN CHRIST JESUS

Humility is the theme of our Lenten worship. So right off the bat, I have a confession to make. I have an issue with the word ‘humble.’ It sounds wrong. Just look at the words with which it rhymes: mumble, grumble, fumble, tumble, bumble, jumble, crumble and stumble. Did I miss any?

These are all ungracious words that attach to a most gracious attribute. Their association has done some harm, I fear. As I picture a humble person I see someone who is a bit of a clod, someone who easily and often falls over himself. The character of Uriah Heep from Dickens’ *David Copperfield* comes to mind, who said of himself, “*I am well aware that I am the ‘umblest person going.*” He used the veneer of humbleness as a way to gain power.

A person who mumbles and grumbles all the time makes you suspicious that maybe he is not all that humble. Being humble would make you a bit more content on whatever your circumstances may be, wouldn’t it? I don’t like the word ‘humble.’

Another word that catches in my throat is ‘obedience.’ Not that obedience is a bad thing at all. Obedience is truly a virtue, but one that is often betrayed by authority that does not deserve obedience. We must be careful where and how we tell people to be obedient.

I had the immense honor to meet Dorothy Soelle when I was in seminary. Soelle was a German theologian who grew up in Nazi Germany. Her book, *Beyond Mere Obedience*, asserts that unquestioning obedience - in politics, in religion, and in gender roles - leads to disaster.

I prefer the term of “following Jesus” rather than the term “obedience.” Disciples rightly question their master. As we follow Jesus we need to employ our every faculty and measure every footfall on our path. Doubt is not the opposite of faith, it is the tool that allows faith to grow into a more mature and profound way. Tennyson said it well, “There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds.”

**“Humility is being humble without all that bumble.”**

The word I embrace whole-heartedly is ‘humility.’ Humility is being humble without all that bumble. Humility is the quality I see in those I regard as closest to the saints (although they do not see themselves as saints at all). C. S. Lewis wrote: “*True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.*” ●



# Worship & Second Hours

## Ash Wednesday, February 18

7:30 pm Worship  
“Habits of the Heart”

## Communion

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17  
Rev. Jim Reisner

## Sunday, February 22

10:00 Worship  
“Covenant Living”  
2nd Hour: *Bible Study of Next Week’s Text: Mark 8:22-38*  
led by Pastor Reisner

## The First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9:8-17  
Rev. Frances W. Rosenau

## Sunday, March 1

10:00 Worship  
“Look Again”  
2nd Hour: *Moral Mondays: The Religious Community’s Witness at the Capitol*  
led by Pastor Rosenau

## The Second Sunday of Lent

Mark 8:22-38  
Rev. Jim Reisner

## Sunday, March 8

10:00 Worship  
“The Scandalous Gospel”  
2nd Hour: *A Congregation-Wide Discussion: Where Are We Headed? A Conversation* led by Church Officers

## The Third Sunday of Lent

I Corinthians 1:18-25  
Rev. Jim Reisner

## Sunday, March 15

10:00 Worship  
“Snake Bit” Rev. Jim Reisner  
2nd Hour: *Report from Liberia and Sierra Leone*  
led by John Kucij with Felicia Kollie-Gambles and Fatmata Hilton

## The Fourth Sunday of Lent

Numbers 21: 4-9

## Sunday, March 22

10:00 Worship  
“An Exile Promise”  
2nd Hour: *Report from A Village: A Self-Development of Peoples funded organization*  
led by Willie White and Tom McPheeters

## The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34  
Rev. Frances W. Rosenau

## Sunday, March 29

10:00 Worship  
“Empty”  
2nd Hour: *Palm Sunday: A Reading of the Passion*  
led by Pastor Reisner

## Palm Sunday

Philippians 2:5-11  
Rev. Jim Reisner

## Maundy Thursday, April 2

7:30 pm Worship  
“The Upper Room”

## Communion

John 13:1-17,31-35  
Rev. Jim Reisner

## Good Friday, April 3

7:30 pm  
Christ’s passion in words and music (scripture readings and Bach chorales).

## The Road to Calvary

## Easter Sunday, April 5

10:00 Worship  
“Faith Is All”

## Communion

Mark 16:1-8  
Rev. Jim Reisner

# YOUTH & CHILDREN'S WORSHIP PLUS

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Join us as we put a new twist on a familiar program - **Children's Worship Plus**. We will change the enrichment time that we have with children when they leave worship from once a month to 4 times a year. The focus of the time will be on worship and our church seasons.

On **Sunday, February 22nd**, children will leave worship part way through and go with Belinda Quaye and other volunteers to the Chapel. They will have an opportunity to learn about the season of Lent, what our practices are, and what the season means for our walk with Jesus.

After worship, church school age children will go directly to their classes as usual. Please keep this new venture in prayer as we live out our baptismal vows to support the faith development of the children in our care. ●

## YOUTH FUNDRAISING

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Celebrate Fat Tuesday and support youth mission trip at the much beloved Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Come to the Assembly Room on Tuesday, February 17 from 5:30 - 7 pm. Room for a delicious \$8 meal of pancakes and bacon or sausage. Laissez les bon temps rouler! ●

*Photo: The youth gathered at the Dr. King statue on January 18th for a special lesson about his life and legacy.*



# SPRING AFRICAN DINNER

## African Spring Dinner • 2015



*Girl at Hope Mission School Water Pump, Paynesville, Liberia  
Photo by FACE Africa, Westminster's 2014 Ebola Prevention partner*

Saturday, March 21, 5 to 8:30 pm; Dinner at 6  
Co-chairs: Felicia Kollie-Gambles & Fatmata Hilton  
**Free Pot-Luck Dinner; bring a dish to share**

***Goal: \$10,000 for Hope Mission School & Ebola Orphans***

Honorary Committee levels range from \$50 - \$500

Write check to: Westminster Presbyterian Church

Memo: African Spring Dinner ~ March 21. *Money will fund the Hope Mission School, Ebola orphans, and Sierra Leone projects.*

### LITTLE FREE LIBRARY UPDATE

1200 books have been stocked in the Little Free Library since its installation in May of 2014. Grassroot Givers is the major source of supply, and also the patrons of the library itself who tend and lend as they pass by. Thanks also to Ann Treadway, associate steward, and Glenda Bennett. ●  
--Marianne Rings

### MAURICE THORNTON ATTENDS STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

By invitation of Congressman Paul Tonko, Maurice Thornton attended the President Obama's State of the Union address to the joint houses of Congress this January. Dr. Thornton has worked assiduously over the years along with fellow members the 369th Veteran's Association for the proper recognition of local hero, Henry Johnson, a World War I veteran. After many years of advocacy, we are expecting that the Congressional Medal of Honor will be conferred upon Henry Johnson. ●



# MUSIC AT WESTMINSTER

## CHAMBER MUSIC IN FEBRUARY

What exactly is chamber music? According to the usual definition, it is music intended for performance by a small group of musicians, playing (or singing) one-to-a-part, and generally enjoyed by performers and audiences alike in small, intimate musical settings.

While Westminster's sanctuary can hardly be called small, it can certainly be experienced as an intimate place, a beautiful place where one can commune with one's own thoughts, with one's friends and companions, and with God. Spiritually, then, as well as acoustically, it is an ideal place to hear chamber music, especially because it is graced by three very fine keyboard instruments: our Mason and Hamlin grand piano, our Hubbard harpsichord, and of course, our Skinner pipe organ.

This month we will be treated to two very special concerts of chamber music, each quite different from the other, but both designed to inspire, edify, and delight.

On **Thursday, February 12**, at **12:00 noon**, the Musicians of Ma'alwyck will perform a free preview concert in our sanctuary, featuring romantic music for organ, violin, and cello. Their 45-minute program will include works they plan to play at a full-length, 3:00 PM Valentine's Day concert at First Reformed Church in Schenectady. Their Westminster program will include several exquisite movements by Rheinberger as well as "Sharp Stones," a haunting new piece for cello and organ by Al Fedak. He will be joined by violinist Ann-Marie Barker Schwartz and cellist Petia Kassarova.

Then, on **Saturday, February 28**, the Capitol Chamber Artists will present a concert of music by black composers. Their program will include spiritual arrangements by Adolphus Hailstork (who grew up in Albany), rarely-heard works by William Grant Still and Dorothy Rudd Moore, and will also recreate a program played by the 18th-century black violinist George Bridgetower, a student of Haydn and colleague of Beethoven. CCA members are violinist Mary Lou Saetta, cellist André O'Neil, and Al Fedak.

Their full concert at **8:00 PM** will be preceded by a **7:00 PM** recital, and refreshments will be served at intermission. Admission is free to members and friends of Westminster. We hope you will join us for some wonderful music!

# MUSIC AT WESTMINSTER

## WESTMINSTER TO HOST RECITAL

The Eastern New York Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Music will present a recital on **Sunday, February 22, at 2:00 pm**, by the winners of their fall, 2014, art song competition. The 4 winners will be accompanied by Michael Clement, director of music at Emmanuel Baptist Church. The recital is free and open to the public and will be followed by a reception. Please come and be delighted by the beauty of the human voice! - Sue Fedak, treasurer of ENY-NATS •

## MORE MUSIC IN MARCH

The month of March will give us three more opportunities to sample some wonderful music:

1. On **Sunday, March 15, at 3:00 PM**, the Monday Musical Club of Albany will present its annual Artist Member/Young Person's Concert. This venerable organization of amateur and professional musicians has been supporting and encouraging the performance and appreciation of music in our Capital Region since 1904. All are invited to their March 15 concert.
2. On **Friday, March 27, at 8:00 PM**, the choirs of Siena College, directed by Dr. Timothy Reno, will perform the Fauré Requiem in our sanctuary, along with some other choral works, including the Wedding Cantata by Daniel Pinkham. Their performance will be accompanied by a chamber orchestra; Al Fedak will assist at the organ and piano.
3. The very next night, **Saturday, March 28**, the Capitol Chamber Artists will perform another varied program in our sanctuary. Once again, the evening will include a **7:00 PM** recital, followed by an **8:00 PM** concert.

See you at a concert! •



# CHRISTIAN LIFE & LEARNING

## Reading List: Part 1

### A REPORT FROM CHRISTIAN LIFE & LEARNING

Members of the Christian Life and Learning Committee have put together a list of books they have read recently and recommend to other church members. Two of the books are in the church library. Others may be in the personal library of committee members. The Committee encourages you to read them and give us your feedback. Committee members are Margaret Randall, Arden Leach, Tom Norman, Felicia Gambles, Lynne McKee, Al and Sue Fedak, Paul Randall, Frances Rosenau, and Jim Reisner. ●

### Westminster Presbyterian Church Recommended Reading List 2015

#### FICTION:

- Strout, Elizabeth: *Abide With Me*  
A minister in rural Maine struggles to regain his calling, his family and his happiness in the wake of profound loss.
- Strout, Elizabeth: *The Burgess Boys*  
The Burgess brothers and their sister are called home to deal with long-buried tensions that have shaped their relationship.
- Brooks, Geraldine: *Caleb's Crossing*  
Set in the 1660's amid a small band of pioneering English puritans, one of whom forges a relationship with a Native American.


#### NON-FICTION:

- Achtemeier, Mark: *The Bible's Yes to Same-Sex Marriage*  
An evangelical pastor explores what the Bible says and does not say about same-sex relationships and marriage.\*
- Bolz-Weber, Nadia: *Pastrix*  
The author reclaims the term "Pastrix" in her narrative about an unconventional life of faith.
- Borg, Marcus: *Evolution of the Word*  
The author presents the New Testament books in the order they were written and reveals how spiritually and politically radical the early Jesus movement began.



# CHRISTIAN LIFE & LEARNING

## Reading List: Continued

- 
- Braestrup, Kate: *Here If You Need Me*  
The author's journey from grief to faith to happiness.
  - Brueggemann, Walter: *Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now*  
The author offers a transformative vision of the wholeness God intends, giving a glimpse of a more fulfilling and simpler life through Sabbath observance.
  - Everhart, Ruth: *Chasing the Divine in the Holy Land*  
The author, a Presbyterian minister, wife and mother describes her pilgrimage to the Holy Land.
  - Hall, Douglas John: *Waiting for Gospel*  
The author appeals to the dispirited "remnants" of Protestant "Establishment".
  - Hall, Douglas John: *Why Christian?*  
For those on the edge of faith.
  - Hatmaker, Jen: *7: An Experimental Mutiny against Excess*  
The true story of a family which took seven months, identified seven areas of excess, and discovered a call toward Christ-like simplicity and generosity.
  - Kraybill, Donald: *Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy\**  
The Amish response to the killing of girls in the Nickel Mines school.
  - McKibben-Dana, MaryAnn: *Sabbath in the Suburbs*  
A family decides to change its frantic pace and commit to Sabbath-keeping.
  - Ottati, Douglas: *Theology for Liberal Presbyterians and Other Endangered Species*  
The author offers an alternative to evangelical and conservative thought.

\*These titles are in the church library.

\*Also recommended: *Presbyterians Today* (journal) ●



# FEBRUARY into MARCH CALENDAR

## LENT 2015

### SUNDAY February 15

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Church School  
11:30 am Second Hour

16

Office Closed

17

5:30 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

7:00 pm Trustees

7:00 pm Deacons

18

12:00 Noon Mark Bible Study  
7:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service

19

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

### SUNDAY February 22

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Church School  
11:30 am Second Hour  
1:00 pm Prayer Meeting  
1:00 pm NATS Recital Concerts

25

12:00 Noon Mark Bible Study  
7:00 pm Mission Committee  
TBA pm Movie Night

26

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

28

7:00 pm Capitol Chamber Artist Recital & Concert

### SUNDAY March 1

10:00 am Worship - Sanctuary  
11:15 am Church School  
11:30 am Second Hour  
7:00 pm Youth Group

4

12:00 Noon Mark Bible Study  
7:00 pm Christian Life and Learning

5

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

### SUNDAY March 8

10:00 am Worship - Sanctuary  
11:15 am Church School  
11:30 am Second Hour

10

7:00 pm Session

11

12:00 Noon Mark Bible Study  
TBA pm Movie Night

12

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

### SUNDAY March 15

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Church School  
11:30 am Second Hour  
3:00 pm Monday Musical Club of Albany Concert  
7:00 pm Youth Group

17

7:00 pm Trustees  
7:00 pm Deacons

18

12:00 Noon Mark Bible Study

19

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

21

5:00 pm African Spring Dinner

### SUNDAY March 22

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Church School  
11:30 am Second Hour  
11:30 am Young Adult Brunch

25

12:00 Noon Mark Bible Study  
7:00 pm Mission Committee  
TBA pm Movie Night

26

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

27

8:00 pm The Choirs of Sienna College Concert

28

7:00 pm Capitol Chamber Artist Recital & Concert

### PALM SUNDAY March 29

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Church School  
11:30 am Second Hour  
1:00 pm Prayer Meeting  
7:00 pm Youth Group

### April 1

7:00 pm Christian Life and Learning

2

7:30 pm MAUNDY THURSDAY Service

3

7:30 pm GOOD FRIDAY Service

### EASTER SUNDAY April 5

10:00 am Worship



**Westminister Presbyterian Church**

85 Chestnut Street  
Albany, New York 12210

## Westminister Presbyterian Church

### CHURCH OFFICE- Hours

9 am- 4 pm Monday-Friday

Phone: 518.436.8544

**Pastor:** James L. Reisner

**Associate Pastor:** Frances Wattman Rosenau

**Parish Associate:** Paul Randall

**Minister of Music and Arts:** Alfred V. Fedak, FAGO, ChM

**Associate Minister of Music and Arts:** Susan Hermance Fedak

**Office Administrator:** Kristen L. Southworth

**Church School Assistant Coordinator:** Belinda Quaye

**Sextons:** Glenda Bennett, Joy Tallmadge

**E-Mail:** [info@wpcalbany.org](mailto:info@wpcalbany.org)

**Web:** [www.wpcalbany.org](http://www.wpcalbany.org)

**Facebook:** Westminister Presbyterian Church Albany

**Twitter:** WPCAlbanyNY

The Messenger is published 10 times a year.

Graphic Design: Jeanne Bianchine

Newsletter submissions are due by Noon on March 13.  
Send submissions to: [westminsternewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:westminsternewsletter@gmail.com)